

REMARKS

Claims 44-115 are pending in the application, with claims 44, 56, 67, 78, 91, and 103 being independent. Claims 78-115 are added by this response. Claims 1-12, 16-26, and 30-40 are cancelled by this response. Claims 44-46, 48, 53-59, 64, 65, 67-70, 75, and 76 are amended by this response. Reconsideration and allowance of Applicant's claims are respectfully requested in light of the following remarks.

Rejected Claims 44-77

Independent claims 44, 56, and 67 stand rejected under 35 USC 103 as obvious over U.S. Patent No. 6,393,464 (Dieterman) in view of U.S. Patent Application No. 2004/0019650 (Auvenshine). Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of these claims, and the claims that depend from them, be withdrawn as the combination of Dieterman and Auvenshine does not provide for all of the features recited in independent claims 44, 56, and 67, even assuming such a combination is proper.

Independent claim 44 is directed to a method for monitoring an instant message or a chat room message directed to an intended recipient. A supervisory recipient is allowed to screen the instant message or the chat room message and to approve or reject the instant message or the chat room message. A determination is made as to whether to forward the instant messages or chat room messages to the intended recipient based on whether the instant message or the chat room message is approved by the supervisory recipient. Independent claims 56 and 67 are directed to a system and medium with similar features.

Dieterman describes a method and system "for controlling the delivery of electronic mail." Dieterman, Abstract. Dieterman's method and system uses "a list of allowed electronic address with whom [a] user is permitted to freely exchange messages." Dieterman, Column 2, Lines 1-3. "[I]ncoming e-mails which are not sent by an entity whose address appears in the list of allowed addresses[] cannot be opened or read by the user." Dieterman, Column 2, Lines 14-16. Rather, the user perceives only a subject line for such incoming e-mails, such that "[t]he user will be prompted to seek approval of the incoming message from the administrator." Dieterman,

Column 2, Lines 16-18. "Once the administrator approves the incoming message with a password, the user can then open and view the message contents." Dieterman, Column 2, Lines 18-20. Similarly, "[o]utgoing messages which are not authorized [i.e., if the recipient of the e-mail is not on the allowed list] will not be transmitted, but rather will be held." Dieterman Column 2, Lines 9-11. "The user will receive an indication that the administrator must approve the e-mail before it will be sent." Dieterman Column 2, Lines 11-13.

As noted by the Examiner, Dieterman does not describe or suggest monitoring instant messages and chat room messages. Office Action, Page 3, Lines 6-7 ("Dieterman is silent on controlling (monitoring) instant messages and chat room messages."). The Examiner instead relies on Auvenshine for these features, contending that one of skill in the art would have been motivated to "modify the method of Dieterman for controlling the delivery of electronic mail messages to incorporate the filter program of Auvenshine to also limit the ability of children to engage in inappropriate communications with adults on IRC chat lines." Office Action, Page 4, Lines 8-14.

Auvenshine describes a filter program that includes a neural network that analyzes the content of messages sent to a viewer program, e.g., chat room software, to determine whether the content is acceptable. Auvenshine, Paragraph 39. The messages are processed to determine predefined language statements and information on the predetermined language statements is input into a neural network to produce an output rating. *Id.* The filter program then determines whether this output rating falls within an acceptable range or an unacceptable range. Auvenshine, Paragraph 40. If the rating is within the acceptable range, the filter allows the content to be forwarded to the viewer program. *Id.* If the rating falls in the unacceptable range, an error message is issued, which causes the filter program "to block the display of the entire document of which the [content] is a part, or . . . to block the [content] producing an unacceptable rating and allow other [content] to proceed to the viewer 4a, b, c." Auvenshine, Paragraph 40, Lines 9-12.

If the output rating is not in the unacceptable or acceptable range, then it falls within the further consideration category. Auvenshine, Paragraph 40, Lines 12-15. "In such case, the filter

program 6 would log (at block 116) the content . . . to a journal, and generate an error message to handle the unacceptable [content] in the manner [described above, i.e., block the display of the entire document of which the [content] is a part, or . . . block the [content] producing an unacceptable rating and allow other [content] to proceed to the viewer 4a, b, c].” Auvenshine, Paragraph 40, Lines 15-18.

The filter program “allow[s] an administrator to set ratings for [content] or documents that are rated for further consideration, i.e., neither acceptable nor unacceptable.” Auvenshine, Paragraph 42, Lines 2-4. “A GUI tool (not shown) would be provided to allow the administrator (parent) to assign a rating to the [content] indicating its acceptability or unacceptability.” Auvenshine, Paragraph 42, Lines 12-15 The ratings are then used to retrain the neural network so that it is more accurate in the future. Auvenshine, Paragraph 43. Auvenshine does not describe or suggest forwarding this content to the intended recipient after the administrator provides the new ratings.

Thus, the Office Action suggests that one of skill in the art would have been motivated to create a system that uses Dieterman’s method to control electronic mail messages, while at the same time uses Auvenshine’s method to control chat room messages. Even assuming, however, that one of skill in the art would have been motivated to combine Dieterman and Auvenshine to create a system in which Dieterman’s method controls electronic mail messages while Auvenshine’s method controls instant messages or chat room messages, such a combination does not provide for all of the features of independent claims 44, 56, and 67.

For instance, such a combination does not provide for “determining whether to forward the instant message or the chat room message to the intended recipient based on whether the instant message or the chat room message is approved by the supervisory recipient,” as recited in independent claim 44, or the similar feature recited in claims 56 and 67.

With regards to the Dieterman portion of such a system, Dieterman’s method is not directed to instant messages or chat room messages, as noted by the Examiner. Thus, even assuming that Dieterman’s method “determin[es] whether to forward” an electronic mail message “to the intended recipient based on whether the” electronic mail message “is approved

by the supervisory recipient," Dieterman's method and system does not provide for determining whether to forward instant messages or chat room messages to the intended recipient.

Likewise, Auvenshine's portion of such a system does not forward instant messages or chat room messages to the intended recipient if approved by the supervisory recipient. Without conceding the following points, Applicant will assume for the sake of argument that (1) Auvenshine's administrator is equivalent to the claimed supervisory recipient; (2) blocking and logging content that needs further consideration is equivalent to "routing an instant message or chat room message directed to an intended recipient to a supervisory recipient," and (3) allowing the administrator to provide new ratings for the logged content that needs further consideration is equivalent to "allowing the supervisory recipient to screen the instant message or the chat room message and to approve or reject the instant message or the chat room messages."

However, even given these assumptions, Auvenshine's method does not disclose or suggest "determining whether to forward the instant message or the chat room message to the intended recipient based on whether the instant message or the chat room message is approved by the supervisory recipient," as recited in claim 44, or the similar features in claims 56 and 67. In Auvenshine's method, the administrator provides new ratings to content that needs further consideration so that the neural network can be retrained. The new ratings and content are then used to retrain the neural network for the filter's future operation. Auvenshine does not describe or suggest, however, forwarding that content to the intended recipient once the administrator provides new ratings or after the neural network is retrained, much less determining whether to forward that content to the intended recipient based on whether the administrator provides new ratings or after the neural network is retrained.

Accordingly, a system that combines Dieterman's method with Auvenshine's filtering program does not provide for the method, system, or medium claimed in independent claims 44, 56, and 67, or the claims that depend from them, at least for the foregoing reason. As such, Dieterman and Auvenshine do not render obvious independent claims 44, 56, or 67, or the claims that depend from them.

The Examiner has also rejected dependent claims 12, 26, 40, 55, and 77 as obvious over Dieterman in view of Auvenshine, further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,076,100 (Contrille). Applicant submits that the Contrille does not remedy the deficiencies of Dieterman and Auvenshine described above.

As such, claims 44-77 are patentable over Dieterman, Auvenshine, and Contrille, either singly or in combination. Therefore, Applicant respectfully requests that the rejections of these claims be withdrawn.

New Claims 78-115

Applicant submits that new claims 78-115 are allowable over Dieterman, Auvenshine, and Contrille, either singly or in combination.

Independent claim 78 is directed to a method for monitoring electronic messages that are directed to an intended recipient. A supervisory relationship is established between a supervisory recipient and an intended recipient. Electronic messages transmitted across a delivery network from one or more sender devices and directed to the intended recipient are received. A first one of the electronic messages is delivered to the supervisory recipient without notifying the intended recipient that the first electronic message has been delivered to the supervisory recipient. The supervisory recipient is able to review and approve the first electronic message after the first electronic message has been delivered to the supervisory recipient. Enabled is the provision of notification of the first electronic message to the intended recipient only if the supervisory recipient approves the first electronic message.

Auvenshine at least does not describe "enabling notification of the first electronic message to be provided to the intended recipient only if the supervisory recipient approves the first electronic message," as recited in claim 78, or the similar features in claims 91 and 103. As described above, Auvenshine does not forward the content to the intended recipient after the administrator provides new ratings. Nor does Auvenshine describe or suggest providing any other notification to the intended recipient if the administrator provides new ratings.

Furthermore, Dieterman does not describe at least “establishing a supervisory relationship between a supervisory recipient and an intended recipient” and “delivering a first one of the electronic messages to the supervisory recipient without notifying the intended recipient that the first electronic message has been delivered to the supervisory recipient,” as recited in claim 78, or the similar features in claims 91 and 103.

In Dieterman, a user's communications can be controlled by an account administrator (which the Examiner equates to the recited supervisory recipient). The account administrator can approve or reject e-mail messages that are sent to the user (i.e., incoming e-mail) by another entity or e-mails that are sent by the user (i.e. outgoing e-mail) to another entity.

For incoming e-mail, the Examiner appears to equate the user with the intended recipient. See Office Action, Page 4, Lines 15-19. As noted by the Examiner, for e-mail messages sent to the user, the incoming e-mail is placed “within a single inbox or database list with each message having a status flag set or not set indicating whether each message is approved for viewing by the user or not (i.e. notifying the recipient that the message has been routed to the supervisory recipient[)].” Office Action, Page 4, Lines 16-19. In other words, when the intended recipient is the user, the intended recipient is notified that that the e-mail is delivered to the administrator. Therefore, for incoming e-mail, Dieterman does not disclose or suggest “delivering a first one of the electronic messages to the supervisory recipient *without* notifying the intended recipient that the first electronic message has been delivered to the supervisory recipient,” as claimed.

For outgoing e-mail, the Examiner appears to equate the other entity (not the user) with the intended recipient. See Office Action, Page 4, Line 20 – Page 5, Line 7. However, for outgoing e-mail, there is *not* a supervisory relationship established between the administrator and the other entity. At most, the administrator has a supervisory relationship with the user, as a result of which the administrator can approve or reject the user's e-mail directed to the other entity. But there is no supervisory relationship established between the administrator and the other entity. Therefore, for outgoing e-mail, Dieterman does not disclose or suggest “establishing a supervisory relationship between a supervisory recipient and an intended recipient,” as claimed.

Accordingly, Dieterman at least does not disclose or suggest a method, system, or medium that "establish[es] a supervisory relationship between a supervisory recipient and an intended recipient" *and* "deliver[s] a first one of the electronic messages to the supervisory recipient without notifying the intended recipient that the first electronic message has been delivered to the supervisory recipient," as recited in claims 78, 91 and 103.

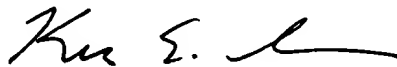
Moreover, Contrille does not remedy these deficiencies of Auvenshine or Dieterman.

Thus, for at least the foregoing reasons, Auvenshine, Dieterman, and Contrille, either singly or in combination, do not describe or suggest all of the features of independent claims 78, 91, or 103. As such, Applicant submits that new claims 78-115 are patentable over Dieterman, Auvenshine, and Contrille.

In light of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully requests that all claims be allowed. Enclosed is a \$492.00 check for \$72.00 for excess claim fees and a \$420.00 for the Petition for Extension of Time fee. Please apply any other charges or credits to deposit account 06-1050.

Respectfully submitted,

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